

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
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R 201022Z DEC 76  
FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6346  
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON  
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 PORT LOUIS 1113

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT MP  
SUBJECT: PRE-ELECTION ROUND-UP: DECEMBER 20

REF: PORT LOUIS 1111

SUMMARY: MAURITIANS ARE VOTING TODAY TO ELECT A NEW DELEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY. THE RESULTS WILL NOT BE KNOWN UNTIL LATE DECEMBER 21. THERE IS A GOOD DEAL OF SPECULATION THAT THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM WILL BE CHANGED IN THE FUTURE SINCE UNDER THE CURRENT SYSTEM A PARTY WINNING LESS THAN 40 PERCENT OF THE VOTE CAN WIN A CONTROLLING MAJORITY OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY. WEEK-END NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED ON DECEMBER 19 ITS FINAL PRE-ELECTION POLL WHICH GIVES THE MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT (MMM) A SOLID VICTORY WITH 44 PERCENT OF THE POPULAR VOTE. THE MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES LEVELED THEIR FINAL BARRAGES AT EACH OTHER ON FAMILIAR THEMES DURING THE WEEKEND, AND IN SPITE OF SEVERAL LARGE RALLIES, NO INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE HAVE BEEN REPORTED. TWO NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHED MMM CANDIDATE RAM PYNDIAH'S BLUEPRINT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MMM GOVERNMENT, WHICH INCLUDES THE FORMATION OF A POPULAR MILITIA TO REPLACE THE POLICE AUTHORITY. THE POLICE COMMISSIONER BANNED ALL PUBLIC MEETINGS FROM

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DECEMBER 19 TO DECEMBER 24, AND ISSUED WARNINGS AGAINST VIOLENCE OR OR AFTER VOTING DAY. END SUMMARY

1. ALTHOUGH MAURITIANS ARE GOING TO THE POLLS TODAY TO CHOOSE 62 MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, THE RESULTS ARE NOT EXPECTED TO BE DEFINITIVE UNTIL EARLY EVENING OF TUESDAY,

DECEMBER 21. VOTING TAKES PLACE TODAY FROM 6 A.M. TO 6 P.M.  
BUT THE BALLOT BOXES ARE LOCKED UP AND GUARDED OVERNIGHT.  
COUNTING BEGINS TUESDAY MORNING AND PARTIAL, INCOMPLETE RETURNS  
ARE ANNOUNCED AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE.

2. WEEK-END NEWSPAPER STATED IN ITS DECEMBER 19 EDITION THAT  
THERE ARE ABOUT 462,000 MAURITIANS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE, OF WHICH  
150,000 WILL BE VOTING FOR THE FIRST TIME (BETWEEN THE AGES  
OF 18 AND 29). IN THE 1967 ELECTIONS ABOUT 85 PERCENT OF  
THOSE ELIGIBLE VOTED. THE PAPER COMMENTED THAT CRITICISM OF  
THE MAURITIAN ELECTORAL SYSTEM IS INCREASING. IT IS CLEAR THAT  
A PARTY WINNING LESS THAN 40 PERCENT OF THE VOTES CAN WIN A  
MAJORITY OF THE SEATS AND FORM A GOVERNMENT. IT IS EXPECTED  
THAT CHANGES IN THE SYSTEM WILL BE MADE AFTER THE ELECTIONS,  
WITH A PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION SYSTEM MOST LIKELY TO WIN  
APPROVAL. THE PRESENT SYSTEM ALSO HURTS THE SMALL PARTIES,  
AS IT POLARIZES SUPPORT TOWARD THE MAJOR PARTIES. IF NO  
PARTY WINS A MAJORITY OF THE SEATS, AMGOOLAM REMAINS AS  
CARETAKER PRIME MINISTER AND HAS TEN DAYS IN WHICH TO TRY TO  
ORGANIZE A COALITION OR MINORITY GOVERNMENT. IF A PARTY OTHER  
THAN HIS OWN GETS A MAJORITY, HE IS SUPPOSED TO RESIGN IMMEDIATELY.

3. WEEK-END ALSO PRINGED ITS FINAL ELECTION POLL ON DECEMBER 19,  
DESPITE CRITICISM FROM MANY QUARTERS THAT THE POLL IS BIASED.  
(THE EIDTOR NOTED THAT THE PAPER CAN'T REALLY WIN, BUT CAN LOSE  
BY BEING WRONG IN ITS POLL PREDICTIONS.) THE POLL GIVES A LARGE  
VICTORY TO THE MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT (MMM); THE RESULTS  
ARE BASED ON 1800 INTERVIEWS THROUGHOUT THE ISLAND (BUT NOT  
IN ALL DISTRICTS). THE POLL-TAKERS CLAIM THEIR MARGIN OF ERROR  
IS ONLY 1 TO 2 PERCENT (WHICH IS NOT STATISTICALLY VALIDBN NO  
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MATTER HOW GOOD THEIR WORK). THEY SAY THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM  
OF A SIMPLE MAJORITY, WHICH WAS DESIGNED TO HELP THE LABOR  
PARTY WHEN IT WAS ONLY A BIT STRONGER THAN THE MAURITIAN  
SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PMSD), IS NOW WORKING IN FAVOR OF  
THE MMM. THE SMALL PARTIES WILL BE WIPED OUT, ACCORDING TO  
THE POLL, AS A GROUP RECEIVING ONLY 5 PERCENT OF THE VOTES  
NATIONWIDE AND ELECTING NO CANDIDATES. THE BEST SMALL PARTY  
SHOWING, BUT STILL LOSING, WILL BE BY BISSOONDOYAL OF THE  
INDEPENDENT FORWARD BLOC (IFB). THE POLL SAYS ALL PARTY LEADERS  
WILL BE BEATEN EXCEPT RAMGOOLAM, WHO WILL WIN EASILY, AND  
BERENGER, WHO MAY SQUEAK OUT THE THIRD-PLACE SEAT IN QUATRE  
BORNES. DUVAL WILL FINISH 7TH IN HIS DISTRICT, THEY SAY.  
THE POLL GIVES THE FOLLOWING FIGURES FOR THE NATIONWIDE VOTE  
BY PARTY:

MMM    44.0 PERCENT  
IP     35.6 PERCENT  
PMSD   16.7 PERCENT

OTHERS 3.7 PERCENT

IN ASSEMBLY SEATS THE POLL AWARDS THE FOLLOWING MINIMUM TO  
MAXIMUM FIGURES (WITH A VERY BROAD SPREAD):

MMM 24-46 SEATS

IP 9-27 SEATS

PMSD 5-18 SEATS

(COMMENT: A SERIOUS FAULT OF THE POLL IS THAT THEY FAILED TO  
MAKE ANY SOUNDINGS IN FIVE KEY DISTRICTS, ALL OF THEM URBAN,  
THREE IN PORT LOUIS, AND STANLEY-ROSE HILL AND LA CAVERNE-  
PHOENIX.)

4. AMONG OTHER FINAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENTS WHICH  
OCCURRED DURING THE PAST FOUR DAYS, DUVAL OF THE PMSD APPEARED  
ON TV AND LABELLED THE MMM THE PARTY OF VIOLENCE. PROFESSOR  
LIM FAT, A PMSD CANDIDATE AND FATHER OF THE XPORT PROCESSING  
ZONE, ADVOCATED INDUSTRIALIZATION TO SOLVE THE COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS  
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OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND DEVELOPMENT. PMSD PRESIDENT DEV HURAM  
PROMISED EASIER EMIGRATION ABROAD IF THE PMSD COMES TO POWER.  
ELEIZER FRANCOIS BLAMED THE MMM FOR THE DISORDERS OF 1971 WHICH  
BROUGHT ON THE STATE OF EMERGENCY WHICH IS STILL IN FORCE.  
DUVAL PRESENTED THE BROTHER OF AZOR ADELAIDE, A DOCKER AND MMM  
FOLLOWER WHO WAS KILLED

SEVERAL YEARS AGO AND WHO HAS BEEN  
TURNED INTO A MARTYR BY THE MMM (BLAMING THE PMSD FOR THE DEATH).  
THIS WAS THE MYSTERY PERSONAGE PROMISED BY DUVAL. THE BROTHER  
ACCUSED THE MMM OF USING AZOR'S "CADAVER" FOR POLITICAL ENDS  
AND WARNED THAT A MMM VICTORY WOULD BRING COMMUNIST TANKS TO  
THE STREETS OF MAURITIUS. IN HIS FINAL APPEAL TO THE VOTERS  
THE PMSD'S DUVAL ATTACKED BOTH THE LABOR PARTY AND THE MMM,  
THE FORMER FOR INCOMPETENCE DURING 28 YEARS OF RULE, CORRUPTION,  
FAVORITISM, AND THE CREATION OF MONOPOLIES, THE LATTER AS A  
COMMUNIST AND ATHEIST PARTY LED BY A HINDU RACIST (JUGNAUTH).  
HE SAID THE LABOR PARTY IS FINANCED BY INDIA AND THE MMM BY  
EAST GERMANY, WHEREAS THE PMSD IS FINANCED STRICTLY BY MAURITIANS.

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
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R 201022Z DEC 76

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5. AT AN INDEPENDENCE PARTY (IP) RALLY IN PORT LOUIS RAMGOOLAM ATTACKED THE PMSD AND THE MMM ABOUT EQUALLY. HE CALLED THE PMSD A PARTY OF CAPITALISTS, "FASHION MODELS" AND "PLAYBOYS", CRITICIZED THEIR POLICY OF ENCOURAGING EMIGRATION, CLAIMED THEY THREATENED VIOLENCE AT THE INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS IN 1968, AND SAID THEY WERE NOT TO BE TRUSTED TO GOVERN. THE MMM HE LABELLED COMMUNIST AND ATHEIST, THE PUPPETS OF A FOREIGN POWER AND SOWERS OF DIVISION AMONG THE MAURITIANS. THE IP HAD THE LAST PROGRAM OF TV ON ELECTION EVE, FEATURING RAMGOOLAM. HE EXPLODED NO BOMBS NOR MADE ANY STARTLING NEW PROMISES, BUT SIMPLY REITERATED THE THEMES HIS PARTY HAD USED THROUGHOUT THE CAMPAIGN.

6. ACCORDING TO THE NATION NEWSPAPER THE LABOR PARTY WILL PROPOSE TO ACTIVATE A "WORKERS CHARTER" IF IT RETURNS TO POWER, TO INCLUDE A 40-HOUR WEEK, HIGHER UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS, LEGAL COUNSEL FOR WORKERS, SICK LEAVE, AND WORKERS' COUNCILS IN CERTAIN INDUSTRIES AND AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL TO PERMIT THE WORKERS TO MAKE THEIR VIEWS HEARD. THE NATION ALSO REPORTED THREE ADDITIONAL WITHDRAWALS IN FAVOR OF THE LABOR PARTY BY CANDIDATES REPRESENTING THE MAURITIUS DEMOCRATIC UNION(UDM), THE UNION OF THE GENERAL POPULATION AND THE MOVEMENT OF MAURITIAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SOCIALIST YOUTH.

7. BEFORE A CROWD OF 8,000 IN PORT LOUIS ON DECEMBER 16, MMM LEADER BERENGER SPOKE OF A TURN TO THE RIGHT BY THE LABOR PARTY AND WARNED THAT IT WOULD USE ITS TV PROGRAM ON THE EVE OF ELECTIONS TO DECLARE "ALL SORTS OF FALSEHOODS." VICE PRESIDENT BHAYAT SPOKE OF THE "CULT OF PERSONALITY" BEING CREATED AROUND RAMGOOLAM BECAUSE THE LABOR PARTY LACKS ANYTHING ELSE TO OFFER THE VOTERS SUCH AS A GOVERNMENT PROGRAM. THE NEXT EVENING THE MMM CITED ITS PAST RECORD OF DEFENDING MAURITIAN LIBERTIES, STRESSED NATIONALIZATION AS THE CENTERPIECE OF THE PARTY

PROGRAM, BUT PROMISED COMPENSATION AND CITED SUCCESSFUL NATIONALIZATIONS IN ENGLAND, FRANCE, INDIA AND PAKISTAN.

8. THE NATION AND THE STAR PUBLISHED QUOTES FROM A DOCUMENT PREPARED BY THE MMM'S ERRATIC RAM PYNDIAH ENTITLED "PRIORITY PROGRAM OF A SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT," WHICH THE PAPERS RECEIVED FROM LABOR PARTY HEADQUARTERS AND WHICH SHOWS, THEY SAY, THE "TRUE COMMUNIST FACE" OF THE MMM. AMONG THE STEPS RECOMMENDED BY PYNDIAH FOR A MMM GOVERNMENT IMMEDIATELY AFTER COMING TO POWER ARE: A LOYALTY OATH TO BE DEMANDED OF EMPLOYEES OF NATIONALIZED INDUSTRIES, IN THE ABSENCE OF WHICH THEY WILL BE CONSIDERED TO HAVE RESIGNED; A STRICT TAX AUDIT OF COMPANIES BEING NATIONALIZED BEFORE ANY COMPENSATION (IN STATE BONDS) IS PAID TO THEM, TO ASSURE THEY HAVE PAID ALL TAXES OWED; BECAUSE OF THE EXAMPLE OF CHILE, WHERE A GOVERNMENT DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED BY THE PEOPLE "WAS OVERTURNED BY THE CRIMINALS OF THE WHITE HOUSE", AND THE CERTAINTY THAT THE SAME PEOPLE WOULD TRY TO DO THE SAME THING HERE, A POPULAR MILITIA WILL HAVE TO BE FORMED AND TENS OF THOUSANDS OF MILITANTS WILL HAVE TO BE PREPARED TO LAY DOWN THEIR LIVES FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC; THE GOVERNOR'S CHATEAU WILL BE TURNED INTO A MUSEUM FEATURING "THE ENEMIES OF THE PEOPLE"; AND ALL MAURITIANS OVER 18 WILL HAVE TO TAKE AN OATH OF SERVICE TO THE REPUBLIC.

9. POLICE COMMISSIONER FULENA ISSUED A FORMAL DECLARATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DECEMBER 17 WARNING AGAINST ACTS OF VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION, INTERFERENCE WITH ELECTORS TRYING TO VOTE, AND THE OFFENSE OF "PERSONATION" (PRETENDING TO BE SOMEONE ELSE AND VOTING IN HIS PLACE). HE NOTED THAT IT IS RUMORED THERE WILL BE DISORDERS AND DISTURBANCES ON ELECTION DAY AND COUNTING DAY (DECEMBER 21). FULENA SAID THE POLICE WOULD REACT SWIFTLY, SEVERELY AND WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ANYONE DISTURBING THE PEACE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ELECTIONS. THE NEXT DAY HE ISSUED AN OFFICIAL DECREE BANNING ALL PUBLIC MEETINGS, PARADES, OR DEMONSTRATIONS AS OF SUNDAY EVENING (DECEMBER 19). THE BAN WILL LAST UNTIL THREE DAYS AFTER THE RESULTS ARE ANNOUNCED, OR FRIDAY EVENING (CHRISTMAS EVE) AT THE EARLIEST. SALE OF LIQUOR WAS ALSO BANNED FROM SUNDAY EVENING THROUGH THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE RESULTS. (ALTHOUGH THERE WERE A GREAT MANY RALLIES AND MEETINGS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY ON THE FINAL DAY OF CAMPAIGNING, NO MAJOR INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE WERE REPORTED.)

10. AND FINALLY, FOR WHAT IT IS WORTH, THE FOLLOWING IS THE CONSENSUS OF FORECASTS BY EMBASSY OFFICERS WHO HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING THE CAMPAIGN CLOSELY, FOR THE 62 SEATS TO BE DECIDED ON DECEMBER 20:

IP 26 SEATS  
MMM 20 SEATS

PMSD 13 SEATS  
OTHERS 3 SEATS  
KEELEY

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## Message Attributes

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